# WILSHIRE'S

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## Prince Kropotkin at Seventy

KROPOTKIN had his seventieth birthday last month, and the event was made notable by a well-worded and sympathetic memorial drawn up by Edward Carpenter and signed by most of the distinguished literary and scientific men of England, from Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells to Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge. Kropotkin is just about as far apart from the ordinary conception of the public as to what a man must be who is the spiritual head of the Anarchists as can possibly be imagined.

His fundamental philosophy of life is reliance upon the voluntary principle. Give a man a chance to expand spiritually and mentally and that is all he needs. You cannot force a flower to bloom. Give it water and soil and it will bloom because it must, and man is the same as the flower. It would seem ordinarily impossible for the public to connect a man holding such noble principles with dynamite bombs, but it does. The explanation is twofold. Kropotkin by his philosophy has no love for authority, and as in Russia a man who has unconventional views of any sort is in constant danger of his life, it is not surprising that Kropotkin soon found himself, after reaching manhood, in the prison of St. Peter and St. Paul. With some people, any man who gets into prison is a dangerous personage, and if he makes a dramatic escape he is still more dangerous. Kropotkin is guilty on both counts.

He found shelter for a while in Switzerland, only to be expelled. He then went to France, only to be imprisoned there in 1883 upon an absurd conspiracy charge. Released in 1886, he went to England, where he has since resided in peace. With this record, and the further fact that he has never hesitated to declare that voting for members of Parliament would never bring about the Social Revolution, he not only fell into bad odour with both the ordinary old party men in England, but with the voting Socialists as well. Furthermore, whenever any Government official in Russia or some hereditary ruler or other in Europe fell by assassination, Kropotkin was known to be always more keen to sympathise with the assailant than the victim. Although the act itself was, of course, always done quite without his knowledge, once done he never joined in the hue and cry against the assassin, but on the contrary would give a philosophical explanation as to the inevitability of such acts when people had no other way of expressing their disapprobation of tyranny.

But the main reason why Kropotkin was so universally connected with dynamite bombs was owing to the fact that he is a Social Revolutionist who does not think that voting is the method that will bring about a social revolution. He is a direct actionist, and direct action is very gratuitously translated to mean bombs. As a matter of fact, direct action merely means that the working class shall act directly to gain their own emancipation without any dependence upon elected State officials. The methods of using direct action may be diverse and numerous, but the great and fundamental method is based upon Solidarity, and the particular weapon is the General Strike.

I take it that Kropotkin is somewhat himself to blame for the general misconception about his advocacy of violence, inasmuch as he has never bothered to deny charges, nor has he on the other hand devoted much space to delineating his belief in the necessity of economic organisation of the workers preliminary to the general strike. Prince Kropotkin is a member of one of the noblest and richest Russian families. He was a page, when a boy, at the court of the Czar. He, moreover, very early devoted himself to science. His "Mutual Aid" is, to my mind, his greatest book. It is a very fine martialling of facts showing that mutual aid in the animal kingdom is much more the rule of life than is competition; that, as a matter of fact, competition between members of the same family is not known in most species, and in those where it is seen it plays a most subordinate part. Man is the only animal who makes a practice of competing his brother to death, and he never did so before the birth of the capitalist system at the end of the eighteenth century forced him to it.

His "Fields, Factories and Workshops" is a most valuable book. It is the classic upon what could be accomplished by science if properly applied to agriculture. I am rather inclined to think that Kropotkin tends to minimise the importance of the new agricultural machinery and its tendency to initiate an era of great agriculture, although it may be said for him that the effect of such machinery is not as yet sufficient to be noticeable statistically. Kropotkin is unquestionably right in all he says about small farming, but at the same time I am convinced that the future is likely to lie with the big farming.

In fact, I think that running all through Kropotkin's economics is a tendency to magnify the importance of the small producer at the expense of the large one, although I quite admit that Socialists as a rule are inclined to the other extreme. My own picture of the future coincides with Kropotkin's as to the

voluntary association of autonomous producing groups, but I look also for a future of co-operative production upon a world-wide scale.

I first met Kropotkin in 1891, and have seen more or less of him ever since. My regret is that the less out-balances the more, for Kropotkin is admittedly one of the most delightful of men to come into contact with. In fact, I know of no one so magnetic. He is a mass of human radium emanating kindly thought to everyone within the four walls of the room. For quite a number of years recently he has been in delicate health, but his removal to Brighton about a year ago seems, I am glad to say, to have quite rejuvenated him.

One cannot help bracketing Hyndman and Kropotkin, for they are both at the head of their respective wings of the Revolutionary Socialist movement, and both have recently passed their seventieth birthdays. Notwithstanding their differences as to tactics they are warm friends, Hyndman speaking at a memorial meeting to Kropotkin the other day in London. Bernard Shaw also was one of the speakers, and rather surprised the audience by admitting that he was at last beginning to see that Kropotkin was right in a number of fundamental conceptions about Socialism, although he (Shaw) had been declaring him to be all wrong for the past twenty years.

I don't suppose Shaw quite meant that his pamphlet, "The Impossibility of Anarchism," was out of date, but I have no doubt if he had it to write over again he might modify some of his early conclusions about the vote as a weapon.

# Is Berger a Syndicalist?

ABOUT the last place one would look for a Syndicalist editorial—or, at least, a very near-Syndicalist one—would naturally be in the Milwaukee *Daily Leader*, edited by Victor Berger. Of course, there can be but one explanation, and that is that it was never written by Berger himself, and that it accidentally slipped by his blue-pencil censorship. It is not quite in line with Syndicalism, as it fails to see that the industrial commissions of the future are not to be appointed, but are to be the organisations of the workers themselves in the particular industries involved. Here is the editorial:—

"The arbitrators who brought about a settlement of the wage scale which was in dispute between the locomotive engineers and the railway managers have suggested that Congress should create a Court of Wages to which may be referred all wage disputes between the employees and managers of transportation corporations engaged in inter-State commerce.

"The arbitrators' suggestion emphasises the tendency which has set in toward industrial government. When George W. Perkins asserted that the nation needs a Court of Business, composed of men who are familiar with industrial conditions and not merely learned in legal precedents that had their origin in the feudal age, he voiced the growing impatience of business with governmental institutions which are not adapted to an industrial civilisation.

"In the efforts of the reformers to regulate industry and in the desire of the business interests to escape from the bungling work of legislative bodies, commissions are being created to deal with industrial problems. The justification offered by their creators for these commissions is that 'experts' are needed to deal with the technical features of industrial questions.

"It is absurd, of course, that a legislature composed of lawyers and doctors and farmers and a few men drawn from the various trades and occupations should undertake to deal with the details entering into the regulation of railways or the manufacturing industries.

"In the management of the Post Office Department by Congress we have exemplified the unadaptibility of our political Government for the management of industry. The President has just ordered that 35,000 postmasters shall be placed under the classified service. It will operate to retain that many Republicans in office, though its effect will be to make merit rather than political service the qualification for appointment. The President's order has aroused a storm of protest from Democratic members of Congress. They promise to have the order revoked. The 'spoils' idea is still dominant in Congress. The very character of our political organisation is calculated to emphasise party service rather than industrial fitness.

"If the Post Office Department were managed by a commission, if Congress were to keep hands off, even to refraining from shipping its own junk at the expense of the Department, the efficiency of the Department would be vastly increased. Every step toward industrial government and away from political government necessarily must increase the efficiency of the industry or industries involved.

"The tendency away from purely political control in the regulation of industry by governmental agencies is more marked than many of us are aware. We doubt if few citizens knew until State expenditures were made an issue in the gubernatorial campaign, that there were over forty commissions in Wisconsin, each one of which is an acknowledgment of the inability of men, whose prime qualification is that they represent geographical divisions, to grapple effectively with the management, control or regulation of modern industry. Conceive of the intelligence that should provide for the election of the members of the Industrial Commission from counties or congressional districts! If they were to be elected, instead of appointed, how could we possibly hope to obtain, excepting by accident, a body of competent men under the existing system of representation? Yet if each industry were to be represented, it would not be difficult to elect a body of men eminently qualified to deal with industrial problems.

"The other day there appeared in the newspapers a brief interview with Dr. Charles McCarthy of the Wisconsin legislative reference bureau. He was credited with the statement that the lawyer is to become less and less a factor in government—that the future belongs to the man who is familiar with the organisation of industry and fitted to grapple with its problems. His interview gave a very faint idea of what he must have had in mind. We have an idea, however, that he was thinking along a line such as we have pursued in this article, though rejecting the *Leader's* conclusion. The doctor congratulates himself that regulation of industry, the creation of the nucleus of an industrial government, which is absolutely essential to an industrial democracy, such as Socialism pre-supposes, is calculated and designed to make Socialism impossible.

"So far as we are concerned, while we shall not cease to condemn regulation as an end in itself, instead of a means to an end, we yet recognise that the foundation is being laid for the superstructure that is to follow if our civilisation is not to perish. There can be no halting, unless there shall come with it retrogression. Every step forward, even though in its immediate fruits it is disappointing, is a step in advance.

"The Commissions which are being created to regulate industry fall far short of the Socialist ideal. The membership is rarely drawn from the industries regulated or controlled. They are not democratically organised. But they mark the beginning, the first step away from purely political government, and contain within them the germ of the coming industrial republic—the co-operative commonwealth of the Social-Democracy."

The Syndicalist looks to the workers themselves governing the various industries directly, and sees in the formation of the present industrial unions the germ of the Industrial Republic rather than, as Berger does, in the present Industrial Commissions appointed by the present State.

Holding this view, it may be easily seen where he parts fundamentally from Berger. The Syndicalist derides the conception of capturing the present State by electing a Socialist majority, and thus indirectly controlling the appointment of Industrial Commissions. His vision of the future is that the industrial unions will grow strong enough through extensive federation to seize the various industries themselves without any reference to the present State.

Therefore, it is seen why Berger on the one hand wishes to capture the State and through it control industry, while the Syndicalist on the other hand wishes the industrial unions to capture and control industry directly. From their own different standpoints both views are logical.. It is a question of standpoint.

## Spargo on Direct Action

THERE is a lot of nonsense being talked about Direct Action by people who ought to know better. I pick up the New York *Call* and find a column headed, "Spargo Aims a Blow at Syndicalism." It appears that John Spargo, who was at one time a Nonconformist clergyman in England and later on a very conformist Socialist of the old school in New York, is delivering a series of lectures in that city upon Syndicalism.

I don't find much about what Syndicalism is, or what it is not, in the report in the *Call*; but I do find that Spargo seemed to find a Syndicalist to be a remarkable composite of anarchist, murderer, bandit, black-hundred-pogromer, counterfeiter, and professional man, with no mixture of plain working man at all in him.

"Spargo said Marx's theories have been distorted and used as excuses by every alleged new theory that has sprung up. Even the Nihilists in Russia, said Spargo, defended the pogrom in 1880 by Marxian theory. They said that the people were beginning to awaken when they had taken action in the form of a pogrom.

"The idea of Bonnot, the Anarchist autobandit, who was recently shot outside of Paris, was that the only way to reach the master class is to do something that directly affects them. He believed in holding them up forcibly. The same idea prevails in the I.W.W., he continued, for they believe that the only way to accomplish the social revolution is to wrest the economic power from the capitalists.

"They, and the so-called direct actionists, declared Spargo, believe that this is the only way to hurt the capitalists. The speaker also told of a band of Anarchists who thought that if they counterfeited enough money the social revolution would immediately follow.

"The lecturer explained that the Syndicalists claim the Socialist movement is a Parliamentarian movement, and not one of the proletariat, and yet the Syndicalists are mostly professional men and women."

I wonder why Spargo did not include some anecdotes about White Slavers and the Arana brothers of the Peruvian rubber infamy, and say a little about Judas Iscariot to round up his category of the Syndicalists and such like. No doubt he would instance Cain's killing of Abel as the first example of direct action on record.

The next time that Spargo goes to Paris he ought to look in at the offices of the C.G.T. He would find on the rolls something like 700,000 names of working men, all Syndicalists, with not a single professional man among the lot.

However, Spargo does get one thing straight: "The Syndicalists believe the only way to accomplish the Social Revolution is to wrest the economic power from the capitalists." But what does Marxian Spargo himself believe? Probably he would substitute "vote" for "wrest." Voting and wresting are about the same thing if you spell wrest without the "w."

Direct action merely means that the workers shall through their own industrial organisations control industry; it has no more to do with dynamite and pogroms than it has to do with electing Spargo to Congress.

### How Cannery Workers Live

*Sioux Daily News*

"All Canneries in the United States," Miss O'Reilly writes, "are not bad. Women and children are not slaves, and filth is not the rule in many American factories where fruit and vegetables are packed. But I found after an inquiry among Government and State officials that there are noisome canneries in the east, in the south, in a belt across the middle west, and on the Pacific Coast—noisome because of the slave-driving of women and children, and because of the filth with which they reek. Noisome conditions which amount to a national scandal.

"I chose to study the canneries of New York because central and western New York is the metropolis of the canning industry of America—an industry which employs hundreds of thousands of people in a season and represents an investment of more than a hundred million dollars."

Many of the can factories in the smaller towns of New York State, says Miss O'Reilly, bring poor families from the large cities to work during the summer season. "They lure them not only by the promise of 'good wages,' but of 'free housing' and 'country air.'"

"As for the 'free housing' and presumably wholesome 'country air,' let me tell you of some of the places where I lived and worked as 'Mamie Riley'—particularly one little town, which, like scores of cannery towns the country over, has for years ignored the factory cantonment on its outskirts.

"I found the big cannery standing beside the railroad, on the edge of the town. Between the factory and track an open drain polluted the air. Fifty feet away stood a cement shed with an overpowering pigsty odour. Hearing voices within, I called, and from the shed emerged six children, wan, timid, well-mannered little ones, whose mothers were at work.

"The reeking place, divided by rough boards, was the 'home' of three families. There was one rusty stove, three rude tables, and some foul mattresses laid upon tressels. Bed clothing there was none, nor any seats. The place was strangling as a sewer, and swarming with flies.

"There was no water provided, nor any sanitary arrangements. It was 'free housing' such as a dairyman would refuse for his cows.

"Across the unspeakable ditch, beyond the track, were ranges of rude huts and a long, low shack. The stench of crowd poison drifted from them. In the shack were housed about 20 Polish families, each occupying a single small room, poorly lighted and ventilated, almost devoid of furniture. A little distance away 16 Italian families were housed in quarters similarly crowded and unsanitary.

"Twenty-five feet from the shacks a woman kept pigs, chickens, and 'other animals' locked in the dark of a vile-smelling shed. Within 50ft. two earth closets, overflowing with foulness, loaded the air with pollution. And between the two, dirty, demoralised, and screaming their excitement, nine children, from three to ten years old, made a game of drowning five terror-stricken kittens that staggered about."

As to hours, it is pointed out that one woman, a capper, "went to work at 7 a.m., carrying her three meals. For nearly a month she never came home until 8 o'clock in the evening, often not until 2 a.m. In one week she worked 119⅞ hours, over 17 hours a day for seven days, while two other women worked 115 hours. Their mates at the machines gave up, utterly worn out, but the can-droppers who kept them supplied bore up to the bitter end."

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## Is Haywood a Traitor?

WILLIAM D. HAYWOOD has scandalised the Socialist Party of America by declaring that he would rather be tried by a Democratic judge than by a Socialist. I don't know exactly the reason of this outburst of frankness, but can quite easily understand certain circumstances which might have caused it.

A Socialist often judges another Socialist not so much by the evidence appertaining to the particular offence in question, but rather by the effect that the accused's conduct may have upon the Socialist vote. The question of guilt is a minor point with him. When the MacNamara brothers were on trial the evidence developed was most convincing as to their guilt, but it took a confession to convince the average Socialist that they were guilty, and even this has not convinced some.

No doubt a Democratic judge is swayed by party feeling, and so is a Republican judge, but it certainly is not true that, speaking generally, a Democratic culprit feels his treatment will be any more generous on account of the judge being a Democrat.

The old patriotic phrase, "My country, right or wrong," has been paraphrased by too many Socialists to mean "My Socialist Party, right or wrong." Where the bourgeois code of morals as to telling the truth and other conventionalities holds good with the bourgeoisie many Socialists, having parted with the conventional morality and not having taken on their new Socialist morality, are in consequence immoral both from the bourgeois point as well as from the Socialist point.

There is no use of washing dirty Socialist linen, but I think there are few Socialists who cannot remember experiences wherein they were astonished to find that a brother Socialist seemed to have less sense of honour than a mere ordinary man. This is but to be expected with men in a transition state between two codes of morality; the only wonder is that there are not more examples of it.

While unquestionably there are no set of people with a higher regard of duty to humanity than Socialists, and no people who are generally so genuine in their trust and friendship for each other, yet on the other hand there can be no question that among the Socialists there are many, and of a prominent position too, who will stoop to the most petty and contemptible methods in their warfare on each other. They do so because, as said, they not only have parted with their former code of morality, but they know that even if they are proven to have stooped to dirty tactics the membership of the Party as a whole will not seriously condemn them if their stooping seems to have been done to advance party interests.

Hence there are perfectly sound philosophical reasons for Haywood not to look for exact justice from a Socialist judge. It depends upon the case.

However, it does seem to me that Haywood has unnecessarily put himself into an illogical position as a member of the Socialist Party in his condemnation of political action.

The Socialist Party is largely made up of people who want Socialism, and who want it now; or, anyway, just as soon as they can get it, and without reference or deference to the breaking of law or order. True, as a whole, they are not contemplating breaking the law, but that is merely because breaking the law does not seem for the moment to expedite the getting of Socialism, and especially not the getting of votes. It is merely a matter of expediency, and not morals, which deters them from breaking laws. They fondly think the American people are going to have the wealth of the United States handed over to them by Mr. Morgan just as soon as they wake up and ask him for it by a majority vote, and they say so in their platform. Haywood doesn't believe this fairy tale, and he is saying so in his usual forcible language.

The result is that the American Socialist Press is full of letters from the four-spots calling Haywood a traitor, and demanding his expulsion from the Party. Logically and technically they are right, but practically, as the leaders of the Party well know, they are all wrong.

Haywood is really to-day a bigger man than the platform of the Socialist Party, and if he were kicked out of the Party it would mean an immediate split with Berger, Hunter, Spargo, Hillquit, and the rest of the Opportunists in one camp, with Haywood, Ettor, and Giovanitti in another at the head of the Revolutionists.

The next step in evolution would be the merger of the Berger wing with the Roosevelt-La Follette-Woodrow Wilson Radicals and the end of any further pretence to revolutionary political action in the United States. Probably this is what will happen anyway, and maybe the four-spots are right in demanding Haywood's expulsion and the issue brought to an immediate crisis. Sooner or later there is sure to be a division of goats and sheep; and, after all, there is not much use of continuing to try to do the impossible of inter-breeding different species.

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## The Case of Engine-Driver Knox

WHEN engine-driver Knox, of the North-Eastern Railway, was unjustly convicted of drunkenness by a stupid police judge, we had a fine example of the efficacy of Direct Action.

The men on the railway did not send a delegation on bended knees to Parliament to beg for redress. Not at all. They did not even communicate with a single Labour M.P. They simply went out on strike and declared they would tie up the railway until the Knox case was looked into. Result, the Cabinet held up the business of the Empire and appointed a Special Commissioner to overhaul the court record of the Knox case and re-examine the witnesses whose testimony had led to conviction. The Commissioner found that the verdict was obtained by perjury. Knox was immediately granted a Royal Pardon and reinstated in his old position.

# Hyndman's "Further Reminiscences"

HYNDMAN is a strange mixture of aristocrat and democrat. As he is a democrat he thinks the democratic management of industry is desirable, as he is an autocrat he would resort to autocracy to bring it about; always, however, posing himself as the god in charge of all proceedings.

The youthful aim of every ambitious Englishman of the upper classes is to become Prime Minister, to be the man in whom the destinies of the Empire rest. A political career ending as Premier is far more of an obsession with Englishmen than is the Presidential obsession with Americans, for the very good reason that the English form of government gives a reasonable hope for the steady progress to the Premiership to a man gifted, as is Hyndman, with unusual political parts. On the other hand, the general rule in America is for the Presidential lightning to strike a man unawares. In the last fifty years there has hardly been a single President of the United States thought of in connection with the office six months before his nomination. In fact, a candidate is usually nominated more on account of his being an obscurity with no record to be assailed. The American machine politicians pick out the Presidential timber, whereas in England the Prime Minister picks himself out.

Now, Hyndman admittedly has many of the qualities that go to build up a great Prime Minister. Among the Socialists he has no rival, and knowing this himself it is nothing to his discredit that he has instinctively laid out his life to conform. I do not mean that he became a Socialist with this end in view, far from it; he could not help becoming one owing to the honesty of his intellectual convictions; but, having become a Socialist, the picture of himself as being in supreme command of the political destinies of England became clearer to him. He had more reason to wish to become Premier, and he had a programme that, logically it seemed, should have landed him there provided the electorate were capable of following the light of political reason.

However, unfortunately for him, the electorate follows its instinct and not its reason; and, therefore, it does not, and never will, vote for Hyndman.

It has taken me, and many other Socialists, many years to see this, and switch from our advocacy of political action, which is based on reason, to the advocacy of economic action, which is based on instinct. I must add, that behind the instinct there is the sub-conscious reason, which is really sounder than that of the conscious.

However, it is obvious that for Hyndman, with his vision, probably a sub-conscious vision, of the Premiership, there is little or no chance of his switching with us lesser men who must be of necessity ambitionless in that direction. Syndicalism offers no career for leaders.

Hyndman says in his book, "The House of Commons is the best platform in the world . . . it provides such a sounding-board that every utterance . . . reaches far. . . . Therefore, it is in the highest degree desirable that any cause which aspires to make its way should have its representatives on the floor of the popular assembly." Now, it is perfectly true that a good speaker in the House can make his voice go further with the general public than if not, but the question is whether even so it does very much good. It has long been notorious that a Demosthenes could not change a single vote in the House itself, no matter how great an oration he may deliver; and it is now becoming equally notorious that he would be just about as ineffective out of the House. However, once this be admitted, the Hyndman idea that speeches of a Socialist M.P. have any superior propaganda value falls to the ground, and with the fall of this theory falls the whole theory of *revolutionary* political propaganda.

Election to Parliament at present has a value to Socialism merely to the extent the Socialist member can trade off his vote with Radicals to secure opportunist legislation, and what value this is has been shown by the record of the Labour Party M.P.'s.

The fact that political action is becoming recognised as of little or no good for either revolutionary propaganda or opportunist legislation has had the result of now throwing into equal discredit both Revolutionist Hyndman and Opportunist Ramsay MacDonald.

The explanation why Hyndman cannot move with the spirit of the times toward Syndicalism is because of the very fact that he is such a good speaker and debater, and is generally so peculiarly fitted to shine in Parliament. His very qualities cloud his future, although they have glorified his past.

Hyndman has been a candidate for Parliament for Burnley, a typical cotton-mill town, for over twenty years. Once he very nearly got in, but for the last few elections he has been steadily losing ground, and now apparently he has absolutely no chance. In fact, it is doubtful if he will ever again make the contest. When I say that Hyndman at Burnley at the last election was the only straight-out revolutionary candidate that had any chance at all, and that with him out of the next fight there is not another man nor another constituency where a revolutionary has a ghost of a chance of success, one can judge in what a parlous state I consider the revolutionary political movement in Great Britain to be.

It is quite the fashion to say that the autocratic manner of Hyndman is the cause of the failure of the revolutionary political movement.

I take no stock of this, although, admittedly, Hyndman's ways might conceivably be more winsome. The failure of the political revolutionary movement in England has no more to do with any faults of Hyndman than the failure of the opportunist political movement has to do with the smug puritanism of Ramsay MacDonald. However, MacDonald is quite as sure that Hyndman has killed his own movement as Hyndman is sure that MacDonald has killed both his own movement and Hyndman's as well.

The difference is, that while Ramsay MacDonald may rise to life again and live in the Heaven of a Liberal-Socialist Cabinet, Hyndman seems cast into the shade of a hopelessly lost cause. His only chance for salvation as a revolutionist was to join in the rising army of the Syndicalists, but by my analysis his political accomplishments prevent this evolution.

He and I have been, and are yet, old and close friends of over twenty years' standing, and I must here confess that I feel rather lonesome now that my own departure into Syndicalism has rendered difficult

the continuance of our former sympathetic attitude as to Socialism and the Socialists. True, we still meet on mutual ground in our objurgation of the Parliamentary opportunists like Berger, Ramsay MacDonald, Jaurès and Bernstein, but I fear that as time passes Hyndman is more likely to throw in his lot with these, his ancient enemies, rather than with the Syndicalist. He cannot remain where he is, it must be either forward or back. His instinct is forward, but his reason tells him that with all his gifts for Parliamentary life he should cling to the Parliamentarians.

In his new book Hyndman deals gently enough with me considering the shock of my desertion from his standard. He rather generously says:—

"Wilshire did really wonderful work (1888 to 1901) in California with his *Challenge* and his candidatures, and the results are seen to-day in the extraordinarily heavy mayoralty vote in Los Angeles for Harriman in the recent election. . . . . While districts in California where Wilshire and his friends had taken up an apparently impossible task twenty years ago and sown the seed blossomed out in a most encouraging harvest. At Berkeley [Hyndman has it Beverly] a University town with an exceptionably well-to-do population, Socialism swept the decks. It was in this period of the early nineties, also, that Wilshire, foreseeing the futility of attempting to limit the gigantic monopolies which were growing up inevitably and, from an economic point of view, advantageously, out of unrestricted competition and the development of capital in its higher stages, raised the cry for the first time, 'Let the Nation Own the Trusts!' It was a plain, simple proposal, which became the easier to comprehend and to take up the more closely it was looked into. Of course, it was derided when originally formulated; but there is probably no single phrase which has had so great a share in stirring up Americans to the appreciation of collectivism and Socialism as this 'Let the Nation Own the Trusts.' Let the educated democrats of the United States use their power in their own interest; let them absorb the absorbers, and organise the organisers for the mass of the people instead of against them. It is to Wilshire's credit that he saw the truth about the Trusts, not only theoretically but practically, long before the others; and that, first in the West and then in the East, he never wearied of pushing his demand, 'Let the Nation Own the Trusts,' on the platform and in the Press. His comments, too, for many years on the every-day business of life, in the *Challenge* and afterwards in WILSHIRE'S MAGAZINE, from the point of view of the ordinary business man, were very useful as written by a Socialist. More of this sort of plain, convincing criticism ought to be forthcoming; and by this and his debates, such as that with Professor Seligman, he did admirable service. I take pleasure in recalling these facts now, when much of his work is obscured by his own fault and he has abandoned Socialism for a hopeless farrago of incompatabilities, which he declares to be 'Syndicalism'—whatever that may mean. . . . . He has 'gone Syndicalist,' equivalent to 'going Fanti.'. . . ."

Hyndman closes by declaring that my aberrations into Syndicalism are due to my being in a "hopeless stage of deglutition," something like the late Joseph Pulitzer (not Pullitzer, as H. has it) was supposed to have been in. It may interest Hyndman to know that my taking up with Socialism rather synchronised with the beginnings of a recalcitrant liver, and that my aberration into Syndicalism coincided with its return to the normal. It is now up to him to originate another theory than being a "dyspeptic" to explain my divergence from the Parliamentarian path.

However, no matter whether it is a disordered liver or a disordered brain that accounts for me and Shaw, and other Socialists, swinging toward Syndicalism, it is a fact, and that is the main thing. The following remarks on Hyndman and his book by the Socialist editor of the *New Witness*, Cecil Chesterton—a brother of G. K.—are of interest in this connection:—

ULTIMUS ROMANORUM.

"A continuation of Mr. Hyndman's reminiscences could in no case fail to be welcome. Few men have so good a story to tell: few can tell it so well and vividly. Above all, few indeed in these miserable times are the figures that can compare in impressiveness and fascination with the veteran of old and all but forgotten battles of democracy, whose sword arm is still steady, and whose courage is still unbroken. If the Socialist movement should be wrecked utterly and for ever, and men should come to look upon it as one vast error and illusion, if Mr. Hyndman's memory remains it will be a permanent witness to how noble an error it was and how fine a type of character it could attract and mould. And that is what makes the appearance of a new volume from his pen, dealing mainly with his connection with the Socialist movement, so particularly interesting at this moment.

"For, honestly, Socialism seems to me at the moment not so much a thing defeated as a thing vanished, wiped out like the host of Sennacherib. Really, I sometimes think that if Mr. Hyndman were to die (which God avert!) Socialism—the old, lucid, definable, arguable, politico-economic theory for which I and others have so often written and spoken—would die with him. I am not talking only of Labour Members, who have sold it for a 'cause,' or of Fabians who have been seduced from it by the superior attractions (quite unquestionable from the point of view of efficiency) of Chattel Slavery. The change is quite as noticeable on the revolutionary side. I have reason to know, for I myself have so changed; but I swear that I have not changed alone. Is Tom Mann still a Socialist? Is Victor Grayson? Is Ben Tillett? Is George Lansbury? I do not venture to say that they are not; but listen to their speeches and note how often they refer to the old sovereign remedy—"the socialisation of all the means of production, distribution and exchange." Is Bernard Shaw still a Socialist? Perhaps: or at any rate he may be some sort of Communist. Am I myself—to compare small things with great—still a Socialist? Well, I am still a Revolutionist. I feel as strongly as ever that the present social system is detestable and intolerable. I hold as strongly as ever that the iniquitous distribution of wealth would fully justify to-day confiscation and civil war. But am I now prepared—for that after all is the crux of the matter—to entrust the control of all the means of production permanently and absolutely to the political officers of the State? I fear I could not assent without considerable qualification.

"This is not the place to inquire into the causes of this simultaneous yet apparently quite unconnected movement in a number of very different minds—a movement which has thrown half the Socialist army into Syndicalism and the other half into servility. For I am writing of Mr. Hyndman; and on Mr. Hyndman's granite convictions the waves have beaten in vain. He has diverged neither to the right nor to the left, but marched straight onwards. He is as deaf to the seductions of Syndicalism as he was to those of Fabianism and Labourism. It is now some thirty years since Marx convinced him that his economic doctrine was the only sound foundation of a free society. On that doctrine he has stood ever since, and still stands. Such steadiness of belief is ever a tower of strength to a man. If any fool thinks it 'advanced' to sneer at it, let us leave him to his folly. For myself at least I will only say this—that I feel towards Mr. Hyndman as one might imagine a Catholic who had involuntarily lost the Faith feeling towards one who had kept it. I envy him the splendid certitudes of which I can no longer be certain.

"In one of the most amusing passages in this book he tells us of his 'silent horror' in watching Mr. Shaw 'supply his waste of tissue by eating only the white of fried eggs.' There is nothing 'albuminous' about Mr. Hyndman. He is simply a man who from very strong personal conviction and at very great personal sacrifice joined a certain movement and stuck to it through thick and thin; and it is this that gives to his impressions of that movement so special an interest.

"On the subject of his fellow Socialists and the men he came in contact with in the course of his work for Socialism, Mr. Hyndman has many interesting things to say. Of Mr. Shaw he says some true and acute things; but on the whole I think it must be owned that it would be impossible for either of these

two admirable and delightful men to be fair to the other; and though Mr. Hyndman is obviously trying to be strictly just I do not think he quite succeeds—any more than Mr. Shaw would succeed were the cases reversed. The best thing he says about Mr. Shaw is that he would be a better dramatist if he ate meat and drank wine. I have always held and avowed that view; but I think Mr. Hyndman's exposition of it is too materialistic. He treats it as a question of nourishment, and it is not really that at all. For all I know the white of fried eggs is quite capable of sustaining life and even physical efficiency. But it is not fit food for a man any more than cocoa is fit drink. And the man who so eats and drinks cuts himself off from common humanity—and, therefore, to an extent, from drama. If Shakespeare had lived on cocoa and albumen he would never have met Falstaff, much less known how to paint him.

"For the rest, the record set out in this book is the record of a very strenuous life devoted wholly to the cause of justice and popular right as the man who so chose to devote it conceived them. On such a life any man may well look back and say with Bunyan's pilgrim, 'Yet do I not repent me.' And this may be said without any reference to the secondary question of whether the form in which he conceived the restoration of justice to the poor will prove the ultimate one which the poor themselves will adopt.

"On the last question, as I have hinted, I now have doubts. I will not labour them here, but I will rather quote a little story which Mr. Hyndman himself tells of an attempt made by Mrs. Hyndman to convert an agricultural labourer of Sussex. Mrs. Hyndman began by pointing out the wretchedness of his present situation and the injustice with which he was treated—to all of which he appears to have assented with readiness, if with some taciturnity. She then explained to him the Socialist remedy, how by common ownership of the land and all that would go with it he would be able to reach a position of freedom and security. I give the conclusion in Mr. Hyndman's own words: 'When my wife had quite finished—and it took a long time to put all this after a fashion to be understood by the Sussex mind—he took his clay pipe slowly out of his mouth, and spat and spoke. "Thank you, marm. You thinks so! I thinks otherwise."'

"I do not regard this, as Mr. Hyndman seems to do, as an example of proletarian ignorance and apathy. On the contrary, I am disposed to believe that that rustic could help me a lot if he would only speak. But I fear he would never condescend to be my instructor."

I think Cecil Chesterton hits the nail in calling attention to Hyndman's tale of the Sussex rustic. It is so typical in showing the difference between the New School of Socialism and the old. The Hyndman theory is that to have Socialism you must have a political majority made up of Sussex rustics together with the town proletariat. He thinks you can finally educate such rustics by pamphlets and speeches to vote for Socialism. It seems to me that his anecdote in itself is a good demonstration of the futility of mere preaching. By the Hyndman theory, if you cannot convert the rustics you cannot get your voting majority, and therefore you cannot get Socialism. Is it a wonder the political Socialists feel they have a hard and almost interminable task set out before them?

The Syndicalist would say that you can never get your rustics by palavering; no, not in a century. Your method is to educate him by organising him into an agricultural workers' union, but if you can't organise him you need not give up hope for Socialism, for you will get along well enough without his help anyway, particularly as you are sure he can't help the other fellows. He can neither help nor oppose anyone unless he is organised, and if he is organised he is sure to stand by the people who organised him, the Syndicalists. However, inasmuch as Syndicalists do not look for the intellectual conversion of the majority to Socialism, but insist that a conscious minority of the workers in the vital industries can control society, they do not feel bound to wait until rustics cease to "think otherwise."

I feel it is rather ungracious of me to devote so much space to a controversial issue between us when I give a review of my friend Hyndman's book. It is indeed a most interesting book and well-told tale of a great man, even though it is not "sound" upon the subject of Syndicalism.

Hyndman is, indeed, as Chesterton labels him, the "Last of the Romans." He is the Marxian Rock who serves to let us, his weaker brethren, reckon how fast we are all drifting away from the old moorings.

Possibly one great difference between the older Socialism and the newer kind is called to mind by Hyndman's talk about the work done by his Social-Democratic Federation—I say "his," although I myself was a member for over twenty years—in relation to organising meetings of the unemployed. Where in the old days, twenty years ago, Tom Mann as a Socialist organised the unemployed, to-day as a *Syndicalist* he organises the employed and leaves the unemployed to Hyndman.

And after all, what can the unemployed do by demonstrating? They can by exhibiting their weakness excite pity and thus get charity, or they may by exhibiting their strength terrify the community and get doles.

Now, no doubt, anything that tends to alleviate human suffering is commendable, but getting doles is not revolutionary; and as for frightening the community by massing unemployed, unorganised, unarmed men, it is absurd. The day of the mob has passed.

Therefore, an unemployed demonstration is in no way a revolutionary proceeding. On the other hand, admittedly the employed workers will have supreme power over society the day they are organised; the only limit to their power is the perfection of their organisation. This realisation of the immensely superior importance of organising the employed over organising the unemployed is one item that serves to differentiate the Syndicalist from the Socialist.

On page 260 Hyndman says that "the educated middle class in England is better prepared to accept Socialism than is the working class." But he thinks that "economic development" will finally educate the workers and render them capable of handling the social revolution. Apparently, Hyndman thinks the mere material development of industrial machinery, such as we witness in Pittsburg under the Steel Trust, will alone be enough to educate the workers. The Syndicalist, on the contrary, would say that it will be the organisation of the workers in their revolutionary unions and the training they receive therein that will educate them, and not the mere being of cogs in a great capitalist industrial machine; no, not even if in addition they may also read the Socialist Press and "Further Reminiscences." Industrial unionism and strikes are to the workers what water is to the boy who would learn to swim. One can't learn the art of revolution except by strike practice, any more than one can learn how to swim by reading a manual.

Hyndman himself practically admits this when he says that "strikes are but the least valuable weapon at the disposal of the workers, yet they have produced some remarkable men." It is just this very point, the "production of remarkable men," that Syndicalists harp upon. It is the bye-product of the strike, the education and intellectual development of the strikers, that is the real value of the strike, not the increase of wages which may be gained. The bye-product occurs whether the strike is won or lost.

Debs, Haywood, Ettor, Giovanitti, Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, and even the Right Hon. John Burns, are all bye-products of past strikes.

"Tom Mann is the boldest, most vehement, and most stirring agitator I have ever known," says Hyndman. "His dark black hair, his fiery eyes, his energetic face and figure, give Mann a distinctly foreign appearance. For life, go, humour, vigour, inexhaustible and unflagging energy, I have never met Tom Mann's equal. After spending the whole of the daytime in speaking, organising, persuading, denouncing, pervading the whole area of disturbance to an extent that make him appear ubiquitous, after a display of zeal and a manifestation of enthusiasm enough to have exhausted half-a-dozen good men, Tom turned up at tea or supper as gay and cheery and full of life as if he had done no work at all. For a good deal more than a quarter of a century Tom Mann has been carrying on this way, not only in England, but in Australia and elsewhere. And his knowledge and charm of manner are equal to his marvellous vitality. Moreover, of all the Labour leaders I have ever met, Tom Mann is the one man who, however successful he may be, puts on the least 'side.' After a speech which has aroused his audience to almost hysterical enthusiasm, down Tom will step from the platform and take names for the organisation or sell literature to all and sundry, as if he were the least considered person at the gathering. Even those who differ from him most widely cannot but respect him.

"At the time of writing Mann is, or believes himself to be, a Syndicalist, and is violently anti-political in his exhortations. More's the pity. But as to his personal influence even in this hopeless camp there is no doubt whatever."

Of course, it would never do for Hyndman to assent to Tom Mann's vitality of mind and body and then allow that his conversion to Syndicalism was not somehow or other an indication of some disorder. Wilshire is a Syndicalist because he thinks he has a liver, Shaw is a near-Syndicalist because he doesn't eat "corpses" and drink "black-jack." Tom Mann believes himself a Syndicalist because, as John Burns suggests (of all men, he to suggest to H. M. H.), he has a tidal-brain. I presume this means Tom is moon-struck since the tides move with the moon. We all remember how that eminent Pittsburg millionaire murderer, Harry Thaw, hired a lawyer to prove that he should be excused because forsooth he was subject to brain storms. It is now easy to understand, in the light of these modern theories of tides, storms, and fogs, why water on the brain is so dangerous.

Hyndman has now given us two volumes of Reminiscences that are unsurpassed in literary style and as a graphic picture of the Socialist movement in England. The price of the book is high, but there is no reason why anyone who does not feel disposed to buy them and has access to a public library should not see that the institution stocks them. Every Socialist should realise that his education is not complete until he has read them. There is no man who has had the experience in Socialism that Hyndman has had, and who is at the same time his equal in literary ability.

Although he will soon have passed his seventy-first birthday, he is still as vigorous as ever; indeed, if anything, more so. I am not sure that I would even match the indomitable Tom Mann against him. Tom's tidal-brain might take a notion to ebb just at the critical time.

May the "Further Reminiscences" have as many editions as the author has had years!

"Further Reminiscences." By H. M. Hyndman. (Macmillan.) 15s.

## The Class Struggle in America

*Daily Herald*, London

ANYBODY seeking enlightenment on what is meant by the class struggle should study present-day conditions in the United States. There the class lines are more defined than in any other country, because industrial development is several stages more advanced. Amalgamation of capital has been carried to a much further extent, and this means that Labour in its struggle to free itself from degrading conditions of life and labour is up against what the Americans would themselves term a much tougher proposition. And the fiercer the fight between Capital and Labour the less polite argument there will be over conciliation round tables and the more violent weapons be resorted to.

The sentences just inflicted upon various trade union officials on the charge of being concerned in dynamiting certain buildings and structures because trade union labour was not employed must be counted as a victory for the capitalists. At this distance it is well-nigh impossible to form an opinion whether these men did the dynamiting jobs or not. The capitalist Press is no more to be trusted about this than about any other matter which concerns Labour. And everybody knows that the American police and courts of law are so corrupt that they certainly cannot be trusted.

Frankly, we are not so much concerned whether Ryan, the McNamaras and the rest of them did use dynamite as an argument. Even if they honestly believed that dynamite was a good argument, and were honestly trying to further the interests of organised Labour, of course, a capitalist law court, working a law made by capitalists to protect their property, must brand them as "criminals." But when the capitalist Press of the entire world weighs in about "justice" having been done, and preaches to the workers of the world about the wickedness of trade union officials, it is really underrating the discriminating intelligence of the working class. Two more colossal exhibitions of bathos and cant we have not seen for a long time as the Press preachments on the right of the working class to get drunk or to use dynamite as an argument.

It is not about the justice of using dynamite, but about the wisdom of it, that we disagree with the Structural Iron Workers of America, if it be that they have really and truly made use of dynamite. If they blew up all the property they could see to the horizon we should not worry about whether it was just or not, because we know that the capitalist's most vulnerable point is his precious property, but we should consider it none the less a stupid way of fighting, just as we think the killing of Kings or Prime Ministers or millionaires is not worth while. It is much wiser to give them the alternative of starving to death or doing honest work for a living.

When the Los Angeles "Times" office was blown up, twenty-three persons lost their lives. The owner of that paper, General Otis, has been one of the most unscrupulous opponents of trade unionism, and it would be impossible to calculate the number of deaths he has directly and indirectly been responsible for in leading the capitalists of the Pacific Coast against organised Labour. But we none the less regret the loss of twenty-three lives, because they were workpeople and not capitalists.

The judge did well to emphasise the fact in his summing-up speech last Saturday that "Trade unionism, as such, was not on trial." Notwithstanding the extraordinary character of the alleged outrages, the interest shown in the case has been far below what was taken in the Ettor-Giovanitti trial. The comparison is extremely instructive. Although Socialists and trade unionists everywhere in America sympathise with the convicted men, and rightly regard them as martyrs to Labour, there was no new principle involved, as when at Lawrence the Socialists faced the precedent of hounding down the leaders of a spontaneous and successful strike; nor was a blow struck at liberties hitherto guaranteed, as when the Syndicalist textile leaders were flung into gaol on a patently trumped-up charge of so serious a character as murder. Briefly put, Ettor and Giovanitti were fighting the battle of the future; Ryan and the McNamaras for ideas which belong to the past. The iron-workers are not much more class-conscious than were the trade union victims of the famous Sheffield dynamite trials. Most of them would have voted for Roosevelt for President if they voted at all; likewise they are for Gompers in the American Federation of Labour and against the Socialists.

Theirs has been a game fight just the same; they are pioneers, and had to fight the fight the way they found it.

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